

# State of Wisconsin\Government Accountability Board

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## Guidance to Municipal Clerks on Processing and Counting Military and Overseas Absentee Ballots for the April 3, 2012 Spring Election and Presidential Preference

### Count what you have on Election Day

Because military and overseas electors have access to multiple ballots [Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot (FWAB), Presidential Preference-only Ballot, Official Ballot], it is possible that you may receive multiple ballots back from a single military or overseas elector. **All voted absentee ballots go to the polling place, even if you get more than one!**

- Bundle all the ballots from one elector together and instruct poll workers to first assess the Official Ballot.
- If an Official Ballot is received by Election Day, and is not rejected by the inspectors, the Official Ballot is counted.
- If an Official Ballot is not received and counted on Election Day, but the Presidential Preference-only Ballot is received, count the Presidential Preference-only Ballot.
- If neither the Official Ballot nor the Presidential Preference-only Ballot are received and counted on Election Day, but a Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot (FWAB) is received, count the FWAB.
- In any case, if a ballot is rejected by the inspectors on Election Day, but another ballot is submitted by Election Day and received by the applicable deadline, it shall be counted if it meets all other absentee ballot requirements.
- Inspectors note any rejections on the absentee certificate envelope, the Inspectors' Statement (GAB-104), and the absentee ballot log.
- If a ballot is counted on Election Day, that elector has exhausted the opportunity to vote in that election, and all other ballots subsequently received from that elector for that election shall be rejected.
- On Election Day, the municipal clerk must post the number of outstanding absentee ballots at their office and on the Internet.
- Municipal clerks must inform their county clerk of the number of outstanding ballots, and email or call the G.A.B. Help Desk ([gabhelpdesk@wi.gov](mailto:gabhelpdesk@wi.gov) or 608-261-2028) with this number, even if it is zero.

**Absentee Ballots from Military and Overseas Electors Received After Election Day:**

Military and overseas electors normally have until April 6, 2012, to return their absentee ballot to their clerk. If your municipality was late in sending out ballots to military or overseas electors, the deadline is extended from Election Day by the number of days late the ballots were sent, to provide a minimum of 45 days transit time. The voted ballot must always still be postmarked no later than April 3, 2012 (Election Day).

**If a ballot from the elector *was counted* on Election Day:**

- The municipal clerk will indicate on the Absentee Ballot Log the date the additional ballot was received after Election Day, and that it was rejected because a ballot had already been counted on Election Day. The additional ballot is stored and secured with the other municipal election materials.
- If the additional ballot is received before the municipal board of canvassers (MBOC) meets to process late-arriving absentee/provisional ballots, the ballot should be rejected by the MBOC in that meeting. If received after the MBOC meeting, no further action is necessary.

**If a ballot from the elector *was NOT counted* on Election Day:**

- The municipal clerk will indicate on the Absentee Ballot Log the date the absentee ballot was received after Election Day. The absentee ballot should then be stored and secured with the other municipal election materials.
- If the absentee ballot is received before the applicable deadline for your municipality it must be processed by the municipal board of canvassers (MBOC). The MBOC will adjust the Presidential Preference results accordingly and report its amended results to the county immediately.
- If multiple ballots are received after Election Day, but before the applicable deadline, and comply with all other requirements, the MBOC should accept a single ballot from the elector in the following priority order and reject any lower-priority ballots also received from that elector:
  1. Official Ballot
  2. Presidential-only Ballot
  3. Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot (FWAB)
- Clerks should update the Absentee Ballot Log, SVRS, and the GAB-190 accordingly.